

EARLY PUBLICATIONS AND EXHIBITS OF NEW ZEALAND FERNS AND THE WORK OF ERIC CRAIG

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Abstract. Reference is made to the first publications on New Zealand ferns and to national and international exhibits of dried ferns followed by an account of the work of Eric Craig (1829-1923), fern collector and mounter of Princes Street, Auckland.

In England, the popular interest in ferns was at its height in the 1850s (Allen 1969); professional plant collectors marketed sets of pressed British ferns, and fern albums graced the occasional tables of Early Victorian drawing rooms. As with many fashions, the craze for ferns came much later to New Zealand than to the British Isles. Although the first publications on New Zealand ferns (Hooker 1855) appeared in 1855, and classified collections of dried ferns were exhibited as early as 1865, it was not until the 1870s that New Zealand fern albums, notably those produced commercially by Eric Craig, came into their own.

Early fern publications 1855-1890.

From the time of Banks and Solander (botanists with Captain Cook in 1769), plant collectors who visited New Zealand at once remarked on the abundance of ferns and the many new species. Amateur and student botanists in New Zealand were first provided with detailed descriptions of the fern species when Sir Joseph Hooker's *Flora Novae-Zelandiae* was published in 1855 (Hooker 1855). In this, accurate scientific names were available for fern collectors. Next, in 1861, came a booklet of 32 pages by Mrs Jones, wife of Commissary-General Jones of Auckland (Jones 1861). This little handbook of ferns was printed by John Varty, Queen Street, Auckland — "Price Two Shillings and Sixpence. Proceeds to be devoted to the fund for defraying expenses incurred in the erection of St Mary's Church, Parnell." Mrs Jones aimed to supply amateurs with the means of identification and systematic arrangement of their dried fern specimens — "whilst the collection and preservation of these beautiful plants has become a popular amusement few can name or classify their specimens" (Jones 1861, p. 3). Scientific terms were kept to a minimum and only short botanical descriptions were given. The little booklet was claimed a creditable "first attempt to popularise the study of the N.Z. ferns" (Field 1890, p. 3). Another popular treatise, priced at two shillings, with simple though detailed descriptions by H.E.S.L. (Leech or Logan?) was printed in Auckland in 1875 (L., H.E.S. 1875). In 1880 came the books of blue-print illustrations by Herbert B. Dobbie — first in two parts then a second issue of the two parts together in one book (Dobbie 1880 a, b, c). A similar collection of illustrations, published by Eric Craig and advertised as his "celebrated Blue Book" (see Fig. 6), appeared about 1888 (Craig *ca.* 1888).

The ferns and fern allies of New Zealand "with instructions for their collection and hints on their cultivation" by George M. Thomson of Dunedin was published in 1882 (Thomson 1882). Thomson's book, of 132 pages and 5 plates, was praised as "an accurate and useful compendium, containing descriptions of all the known species" (Cheeseman 1925, p. xxxii), but there were also objections — "that the descriptions were too scientific for ordinary readers" (Field 1890, p. 3). Then in 1890 came H. C. Field's large book (28 x 22 cm), *Ferns of New Zealand* with 164 pages of text and 29 pages of plates illustrating nearly all the species (Field 1890).

Exhibits of dried ferns 1865-1890

At the New Zealand Exhibition held in Dunedin in 1865, where there were classes for botanical collections, the Governor General exhibited ferns. "His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B. contributes a well-mounted and carefully classified collection of Ferns, stated to have been compiled and arranged by the Misses Sinclair, daughters of the late lamented Dr Sinclair of Auckland." At the same exhibition it is recorded. "A very interesting and well-arranged Book of Ferns, collected and mounted by the Students of St. John's College, Auckland, is exhibited by the Rev. Mr Blackburn, of Taranaki." John Buchanan (well known later for his publications on indigenous grasses) presented "ferns of Otago, comprising 73 species . . .", and H. F. Logan of Wellington exhibited "undoubtedly one of the best collections in the Exhibition." (*New Zealand Exhibition, 1865. Reports and awards of the jurors.* 532 p.).

Fern collectors in New Zealand were adept at pressing, drying and mounting specimens for display during the latter part of the 19th century and exhibited overseas as well as locally. At the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London, 1886, there were fern exhibits sent from New Zealand: Mrs C. C. Armstrong of Dunedin, "Framed fern pictures and books of ferns mounted and named"; G. K. Burton of Nelson, T. E. Ellis, of Wanganui and T. C. Tims of Te Puke, all showed albums of New Zealand ferns, and Florence Renshaw, of Auckland, had "Four ornamental cards of ferns." Mrs E. B. Maxwell of Wellington had evidently used fern designs in her "Splash-work curtains of New Zealand ferns." In the Horticultural Section, H. C. Field of Wanganui (author of *The ferns of New Zealand*, 1890) presented a collection of ferns — probably live plants in Wardian cases. (*Catalogue of New Zealand Exhibits.* Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London, 1886. 130 p.).

In Melbourne, at the Centennial International Exhibition, 1888, J. Marshall and W. C. Wells of Hokitika had both sent two books of ferns and E. Maxwell of Opunake had a "large collection of dried ferns" in the New Zealand Court. (*New Zealand Court Catalogue, Centennial International Exhibition, Melbourne, 1888.* 71 p.).

At the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition held in Dunedin during 1889-90. W. C. Wells was again exhibiting. Here, his albums were labelled "Fancy books of Specimen Ferns". Others who displayed dried ferns at this Dunedin Exhibition were: C. Hicks, Greymouth; Misses L. Manis and N. Falla, Westport; G. M. Thomson, Dunedin; also Miss M. Barclay, whose exhibits were "Plush Curtains, Plush Cushions, and New Zealand Ferns"! (*New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition Dunedin, 1889-90. Official Catalogue of the Exhibits.* 304 p.).

New Zealand fern albums ca. 1875

It appears that fern albums were first produced commercially and offered for sale in Auckland in the 1870s. Some elaborate albums had carved or inlaid wooden covers, others were bound in leather. In them the dried fern fronds were delicately arranged as if growing from a velvety base of mosses and lycopods (Fig. 1). These



Fig. 1. Page (42.5 x 28 cm) from wooden-covered Eric Craig fern album, ca. 1886.

books of ferns were probably more often bought as souvenirs to send away to "the old country" than to adorn occasional tables in New Zealand drawing rooms. "Best Presents for England" ran an advertisement for books of fern specimens collected and mounted by T. Cranwell of Parnell, Auckland, in 1875. This advertisement (Fig. 2) appeared in *Ferns which grow in New Zealand and the adjacent islands, plainly described* (L., H.E.S. 1875). The publisher of this booklet, Edward Wayte, bookseller and stationer of 100 Queen Street, Auckland, also advertised fern specimens for sale — "New Zealand Ferns carefully Mounted on Boards or in Books, kept in Stock, or Prepared to Order, with Carved Mottled Kauri Covers." (Fig. 3). Here, too, Eric Craig, of Princes Street, Auckland, announced that he could "supply, in any quantity, dried specimens of New Zealand Ferns" and would exchange New Zealand ferns for foreign specimens (Fig. 4).

Eric Craig 1829-1923

Enquiries, from both overseas and within New Zealand, about Eric Craig's old fern albums (several of which are held by the Auckland Institute and Museum Herbarium) led to a search for information about his life and work. Details of his family life were provided by a grand-daughter (Mrs Pat Dennis); advertisements pertaining to his shop and the sale of dried fern specimens were found in early New Zealand directories in the Auckland Institute and Museum Library, and correspondence between Craig and Cheeseman was examined in the Museum files.

Eric Craig, (sometimes listed as Ian Eric or John Eric) was born in Scotland in 1829 and came to Auckland via Australia in 1852. In 1855 he married a widow, Mrs Gilberd, who had property in Princes Street (Mrs Dennis, pers. comm.). A daughter, Charlotte Philadelphia, was born on 2 April 1856 (St Pauls Church, Auckland. Register of Baptisms, 1855-1900), and subsequently there were five more children. From 1855 to 1858 Craig apparently lived in Freeman's Bay and practised as a builder (Auckland Provincial Gazette, Electoral Roll 1855-58) and in 1866-67 his address was given either as Symonds Street (Stevens & Bartholomew's New Zealand Directory, 1866-67) or as Collingwood Street (Mitchell and Seiffer's Directory, Auckland, 1866-67). By 1873 when his address was Princes Street (St Pauls Church, Auckland. Register of Baptisms, 1855-1900) he had probably built his own house and it is said that he also had a sash and door factory there at some time (Mrs Dennis, pers. comm.).

In *Wise and Co's New Zealand Directory* for 1878-79 Eric Craig was listed as a carpenter, on the East side of Princes Street only a few doors along from the new Auckland Museum building, opened in 1876, where T. F. Cheeseman was secretary and curator. By 1885 Craig's "fern depot", Princes Street, was listed in Wise's Directory. Besides "fern depot" it was variously known as "Craig's Museum", "Eric Craig's Fern and Curiosity Shop" (Fig. 5) and "Craig's Curiosity Shop" (Fig. 6). Craig built this two-storied shop adjoining his house, right on the street frontage (Fig. 5). Although he sold "all kinds of Maori carvings and curios" (Fig. 6), also shells, kauri gum, greenstone and vegetable caterpillars, ferns were his main concern. He advertised ferns in sets from 12-152 varieties, in books, boxes or on cardboard; also unmounted classified sets for educational purposes (Fig. 6).

It is not known how early Craig's interest in ferns was developed but a letter to Cheeseman in 1874 shows that he was at that time intent on gathering some of the more unusual species in the north — no doubt for inclusion in the collections he offered for sale. From Kawakawa, Bay of Islands, he wrote, asking "what particular kinds of

BEST PRESENTS FOR ENGLAND !

NEW ZEALAND FERNS.

Handsome Bound Book of Ferns,
 WITH MOTTLED KAURI COVERS,
 Collected and Mounted by
T. CRANWELL, PARNELL.

Extract of Letter received by T. Cranwell.—"The Collection of Ferns shewed me were correctly named and beautifully preserved."—
 J. D. HOOKER, F.R.S.L.S., Royal Gardens, Kew, London.

"The Book is exactly the kind of thing to choose for a present,"
 —*New Zealand Herald.*

"For a Drawing-room Table no more tasteful ornament could be found"—*Southern Cross.*

See that each Book bears the name of T. CRANWELL,
 Parnell, Auckland, N.Z.

May be obtained also of the principal Booksellers.

FERNS MOUNTED ON CARDBOARD
 From 12s. per Set of 24 Sheets

2

EDWARD WAYTE,
 WHOLESALE AND RETAIL
Bookseller and Stationer,
 PUBLISHER,
Newsvendor, Bookbinder, &c.

100, QUEEN STREET, AUCKLAND.

NEW ZEALAND FERNS carefully Mounted on Boards or
 in Books, kept in Stock, or Prepared to Order, with
 Carved Mottled Kauri Covers.

Auckland Circulating Library,
 100, QUEEN STREET, AUCKLAND.

3

ERIC CRAIG,
 PRINCES STREET, AUCKLAND,
 CAN SUPPLY, IN ANY QUANTITY,
 DRIED SPECIMENS
NEW ZEALAND FERNS
 MOUNTED OR UNMOUNTED,
Exchange New Zealand Ferns for Foreign Ferns.

4

Figs. 2-4. Advertisements. 2. T. Cranwell's advertisement (17.6 x 10.6 cm), 1875. 3. Edward Wayte's advertisement (17.6 x 10.6 cm), 1875. 4. Eric Craig's advertisement (10.6 x 8 cm), 1875.



Fig. 5. Craig's Museum, Princes Street, Auckland, ca. 1880.

Ferns grow in the Bay of Islands District and the particular place that I should be able to find them" (Craig to Cheeseman 29 October 1874). He wrote again in 1875, saying he had been over all the fern hills in the Kawakawa district but had not been able to find *Botrychium ternatum* or its variety *dissectum* — could Cheeseman tell him "of any settlers house that was near either of them." Neither could he find *Schizea bifida* — "I walked from Mr Bakers place at the head of the Waikare down to Russell and could find *fistulosa* in several places but I could not see *bifida* — can I get *Todea barbara* anywhere near Mongonui . . ." he wrote, adding the remark that when he came back he intended walking overland to Whangarei from Russell (Craig to Cheeseman, February 18, 1875).

A larger supply of fern specimens than Craig himself could provide was needed to maintain a good stock of mounted sheets and fern albums for sale at Craig's Museum and it is likely he paid for material furnished by people in many parts of New Zealand. In one instance a box of dried ferns, mosses and seaweeds, from Fiordland, obviously destined for Craig in the first place, was presented to the Auckland Institute and Museum Herbarium in 1966. The specimens, collected by W. W. Webb at Martins Bay, Fiordland, about 1890, had been held by a family for many years after the collector's decease. In the box with dried ferns was Craig's printed leaflet, "List of New Zealand ferns and lycopods" (Fig. 7), also a copy (Fig. 8) of Craig's "celebrated Blue Book" (Craig ca. 1888) as advertised in 1891 (Fig. 6). Inside the cover of this book was written "June 1890 W. W. Webb Martins Bay Otago New Zealand".

The so-called "Blue Book" published by Craig (ca. 1888) was almost a facsimile of the book of fern illustrations produced by Herbert B. Dobbie in 1880 (Dobbie

CRAIG'S CURIOSITY SHOP,
NEAR THE MUSEUM.
 Princes Street, Auckland,
 IS THE BEST PLACE IN ALL THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES
 FOR
SHELLS, FERNS & CURIOS

←————→

NEW ZEALAND FERNS
 Mounted in Sets, from 12 to 152 Varieties, either in Books, Boxes,
 or on Cardboard.
 Also in Unmounted Classified Botanical Sets, for Class Purposes,
 or Museums.

◆

MOTTLED KAURI COVERED BOOKS A SPECIALTY.

◆

*Printer and Publisher of the celebrated BLUE BOOK, containing Illustrations
 of all the New Zealand Ferns.*

ALL KINDS OF MAORI CARVINGS AND CURIOS
 viz.—Taiahas or Maori Staff—Te Whata-wha or Battle Axe—Stone, Bone, and
 Wood Meres, or Patus—Maori Paddles - Baiers—Stone Axes and Fish-hooks—
 Korowais and Kaitakas, or Maori Cloaks—Piu Piu—Kits and Mats—and a large
 quantity of Maori Carvings and Carved Slabs.
 SHELLS, SHELL NECKLACES AND ORNAMENTS, KAURI GUM AND GEM ORNA-
 MENTS, GREENSTONE AND GREENSTONE PENDANTS.

◆

Curiosities from the Pacific Islands
OF EVERY KIND.
VEGETABLE CATERPILLARS.

◆

NOTE THE ADDRESS
ERIC CRAIG,
Fern and Curiosity Dealer,
PRINCES STREET, AUCKLAND.

Fig. 6. Eric Craig's advertisement (18.2 x 10.8 cm), 1891.

1880c). In fact, Dobbie handed over his plates to Craig (*New Zealand National Bibliography* 2, p. 343). Both of these books, 28 x 21.5 cm, were much the size and softness of a school exercise book and contained 104 pages of named fern illustrations with no text. White silhouettes of life-sized fern fronds were reproduced on bright blue paper. Dobbie, in a letter to the editor of the *New Zealand Herald*, 4 December, 1880, stated "the method of obtaining the impressions is a simple form of photography or nature printing . . ." According to an entry in the *New Zealand National Bibliography*

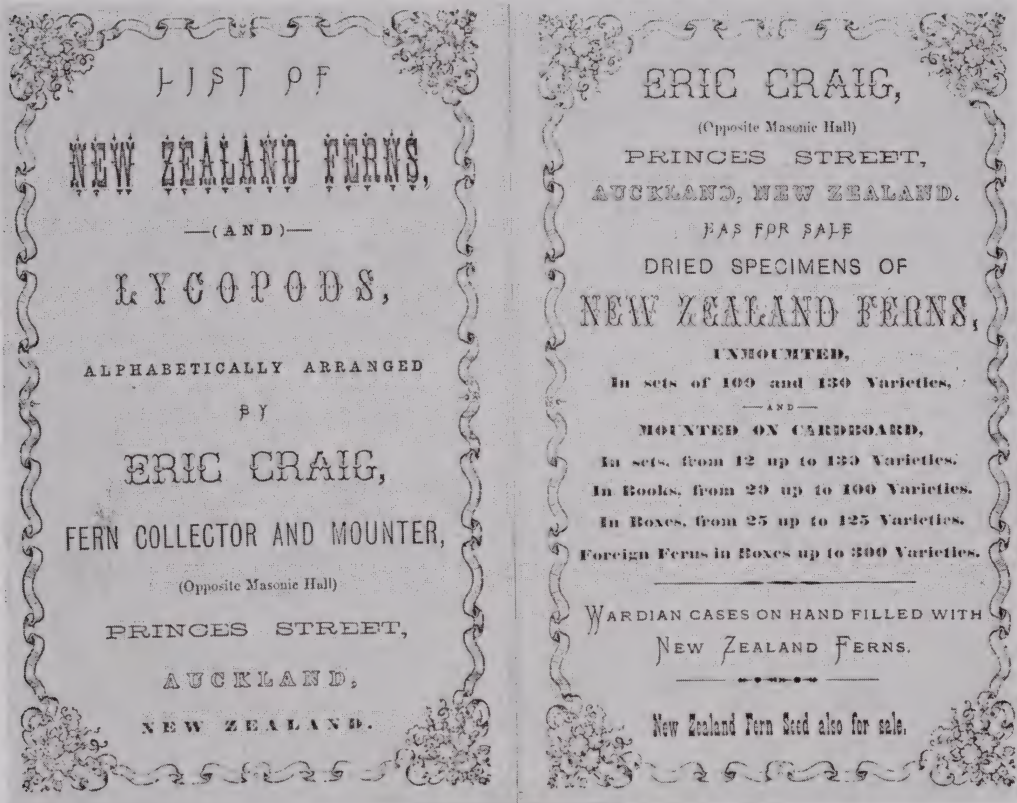


Fig. 7. Front and back pages of Eric Craig's four page leaflet (19.2 x 11.7 cm), ca. 1890.

2, p. 343, the illustrations were "Reproductions by dye process of originals mounted on glass". The general appearance is of a book of blueprints.

In both Dobbie's and Craig's blue books, prints of more than one fern were included on some pages with, usually, the localities, as well as the names, of the specimens depicted. Craig added some new illustrations and not only re-arranged many of Dobbie's plates but also changed localities. This was not in accordance with Dobbie's practice. He claimed, in his letter to the *New Zealand Herald* quoted above (see above, p. 69) "The habitat given is where each individual specimen was gathered." In this letter Dobbie also wrote, "The book is intended more as a help to fern collectors than as a scientific work although the ferns are named and arranged in accordance with "Hooker and Baker's Synopsis Filicum" He acknowledged "the valuable assistance from T. F. Cheeseman F.G.S. and Mr Craig of Princes St." No doubt it was because of Craig's help, probably in the way of providing specimens for illustration, that Dobbie handed over the plates to him.

In the *New Zealand National Bibliography* 2, p. 343 only one issue of Craig's Blue Book is listed and it is named as a second edition of Dobbie's book of illustrations of 1880. This is not correct and it is here established that Craig himself produced two editions of blue print illustrations. The first edition (Craig ca. 1888), entitled "New Zealand Ferns. 167 varieties illustrated by Eric Craig fern mounter



Fig. 8. Cover of Eric Craig's "Blue Book" (28 x 21.5 cm), ca. 1888.

Princes St. Auckland" (see Fig. 8), was probably published before 1890 as the copy held in the Auckland Institute and Museum Library has the date "June, 1890" together with the owner's name handwritten inside the cover. The second edition (Craig *ca.* 1892), besides being labelled as such, had five more illustrations — "New Zealand Ferns. 172 varieties illustrated by Eric Craig fern mounter Princes St Auckland 2d ed." (as listed in *New Zealand National Bibliography* 2, p. 343). A copy of the second edition is held by the library of Botany Division, DSIR, Lincoln, Christchurch (B. Macmillan pers. comm.).

As well as dried material Craig must have had a supply of live plants for sale. In one of his earliest advertisements (Fig. 7) he offered "Wardian cases on hand filled with New Zealand ferns." It is likely that any demand for Wardian cases came from horticulturists or botanists, requiring to ship fern plants overseas for exhibitions or for botanic gardens, rather than from local fern enthusiasts. "Few Colonial houses have room enough inside them for fern stands, with bell glasses over them, to contain delicate ferns; or better still Wardian cases" wrote H. C. Field in *The ferns of New Zealand* (Field 1890, p. 33). In this publication Field devoted 8 pages to the cultivation of ferns as well as giving instructions for mounting dried specimens. He suggested "if you wish them for inspection of ordinary and non-scientific friends, who would be likely to handle them carelessly, it is better to mount them in a scrap-book" and gave several methods of gluing them down (Field 1890, p. 25). Craig glued his specimens very firmly in the old fern albums now in the Auckland Institute and Museum Herbarium and they have withstood plenty of handling.

Two of Craig's large fern albums in the AK Herbarium are complete with carved mottled kauri covers, as advertised (Fig. 6). The larger album (Fig. 9), which has "For Mama With best love Waiheke Island New Zealand January 1887" handwritten on the fly leaf, was presented to the Herbarium in 1952. Bound by Wilson and Horton expressly for Craig, the volume measures 45 x 32 cm, is 10 cm thick and contains 152 dried New Zealand fern specimens, all in good condition, firmly glued on to large pages of white card hinged with linen. Each fern frond, or portion thereof, springs from a base of bright green mosses, lycopodium or small leaflets of various ferns obviously added as decoration. The scientific plant name, printed below each collage, only applies to the central frond (Fig. 1) — no names are given for the lowly mosses and lycopods. The smaller album (Fig. 10), 35 x 28 cm and 4 cm thick, also with a carved cover, was donated in 1976. It has Eric Craig's yellow label inside (Fig. 11) but no date of production.

Other large leather-bound albums of New Zealand ferns presented to the Herbarium over the years have specimens collected as early as 1864 ("gathered in Feby. 1864 by J.J. for E.M.R."), 1883, 1884-85 and 1898. Some of the books have no dates and no clues as to collectors of the ferns.

As well as Craig's handsome wooden-covered books and old leather-bound volumes (one recently presented by the Botany Department, Victoria University of Wellington) the Auckland Institute and Museum Herbarium has also acquired a small wooden box (Fig. 12) as advertised by Craig, which contains 25 miniature sheets (21 x 14 cm) of dried ferns. The kauri box (27 x 19 cm) is beautifully made, in the shape of a book, with a hinged and latched lid which has a fern design in "splashwork" on it (Fig. 13). This box was presented recently through the University of Auckland, Botany Department, coming from a deceased estate.



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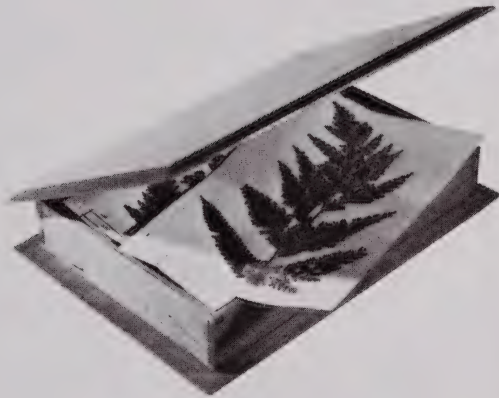


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Figs. 9, 10. Wooden-covered Eric Craig fern albums. 9. Album (45 x 32 x 10 cm), *ca.* 1886, presented to Museum 1952. 10. Album (35 x 28 x 4 cm), presented to Museum 1976.



Fig. 11. Eric Craig's yellow label (12 x 8.5 cm) inside fern album.



12



13

Figs. 12, 13. Eric Craig's wooden box (27 x 19 x 5 cm) of miniature sheets of ferns. 12. Box showing mounted specimens. 13. Lid of box showing fern design on wood.

Of considerable value, are the hundreds of native and exotic fern specimens mounted by Craig and presented by him to the Auckland Institute and Museum in January 1923 (see below, p. 78). Many of Craig's cardboard sheets of overseas specimens provide the only reference material, in the AK Herbarium, of fern species from certain countries: e.g. *Lindsaea heterophylla*, Ceylon; *Cheilanthes ferruginea*, Jamaica; *Asplenium fissum*, Turkey; *Adiantum caudatum*, Cape Verde Islands; *Adiantum flabellulatum*, Hongkong; *Adiantum lucidum*, Trinidad; etc.

Not all the above ferns were listed in Craig's 31 page catalogue entitled, "Catalogue of ferns and lycopodiums in the herbarium of Eric Craig, Princes Street, Auckland" (Fig. 14), printed in England by Chas. Stocker, Summer Row, Birmingham (Craig ca. 1890). This catalogue would have had a wide distribution to overseas

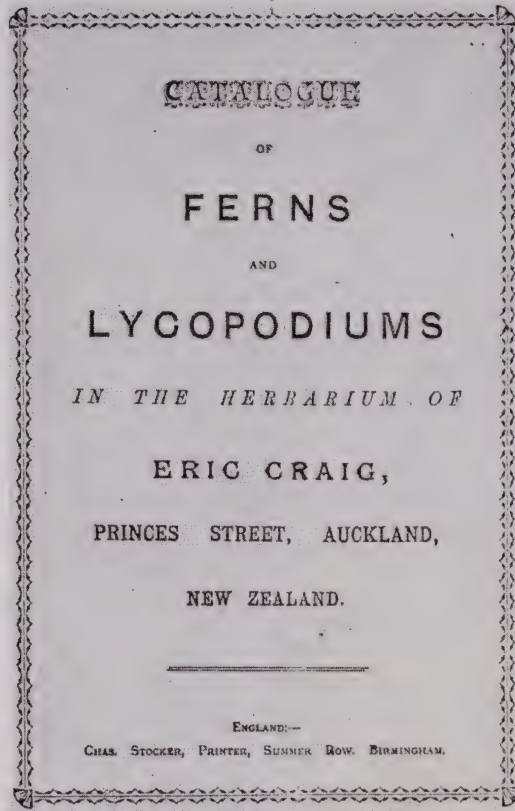


Fig. 14. Cover of Eric Craig's fern catalogue (18 x 12 cm), ca. 1890.

herbaria and plant collectors. Craig had a note in it to the effect that he was willing to make exchanges, offering 140 varieties of New Zealand ferns "for any Dried botanical, seeded specimens of Ferns foreign to New Zealand, that are not mentioned in this catalogue."

"Foreign ferns in Boxes up to 300 varieties" (Fig. 7) were presumably obtained as a result of the catalogue — as exchange from overseas herbaria to which Craig sent specimens. Lanjouw and Stafleu (1954) listed Craig specimens in the following herbaria: F. (Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, U.S.A.), M.B.G. (?Missouri Botanical Gardens, St Louis, U.S.A.) and WELC (Wellesley College, Massachusetts, U.S.A.).

Craig also collected Maori carvings and artifacts which were advertised for sale at his fern and curiosity shop in Princes Street. From 1889 to 1923 it is recorded that many Maori artifacts came from Eric Craig to the Auckland Museum (an accession of 1922 listed 19 Maori carvings) — some were presented and some were purchased (see letter, Fig. 15).

In the "Catalogue of Curiosities, etc. in the Private Collection of Eric Craig" (Craig 1916) there were many Pacific Island curios listed as well as Maori items — also a "Fern Cabinet Herbarium containing 1200 different varieties of named ferns

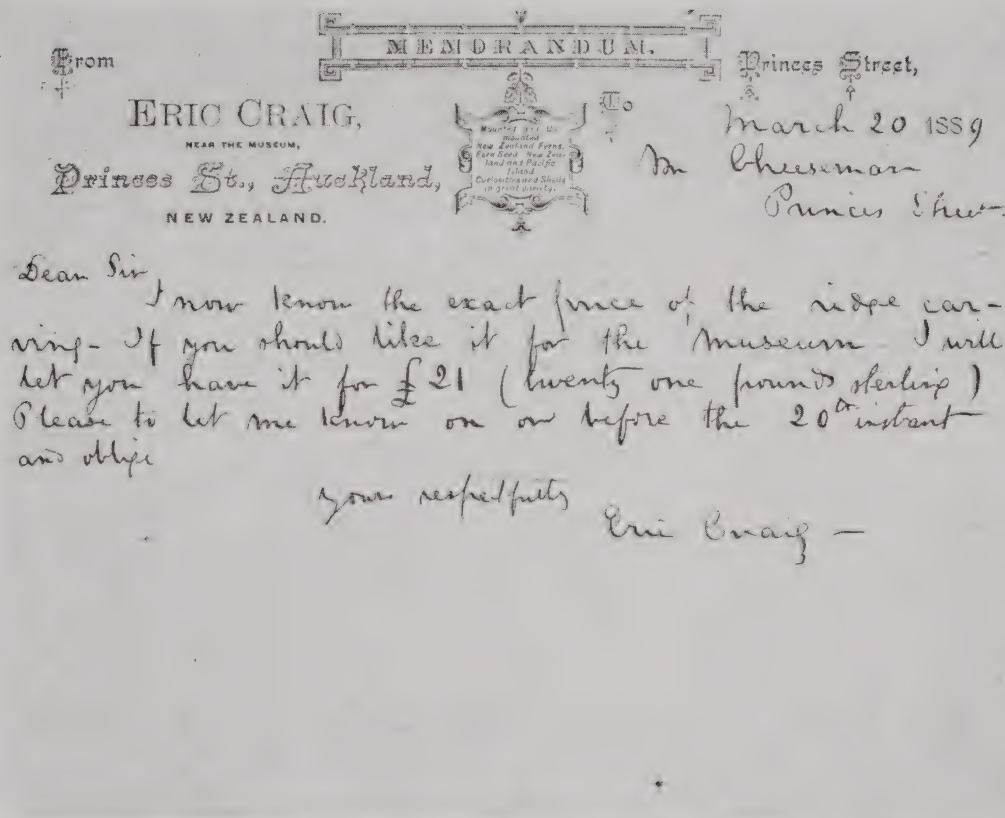


Fig 15. Letter from Eric Craig to T. F. Cheeseman, 20 March 1889.

mounted on cardboard.” The printed catalogue was a guide to the collections retained, and added to, by Craig after he gave up his business in Princes Street about 1912. Still at 8 Princes Street in 1910 (*Cleaves Auckland Directory*, 1910), by 1912 Craig’s address was Wainoni, an early name for an area near Greenhithe.

Before he retired from business Craig had, in 1905, purchased 40 acres of land, beside Oruhamo or Hellyers Creek, Greenhithe, on the upper reaches of the Waitemata Harbour (King 1975). Here he proceeded to make a private park, planting trees, forming paths and cutting steps up the cliff from the water’s edge. In a pamphlet he had printed by Wilson and Horton (Craig *ca.* 1907) entitled “History of Tauhinu (now Tauhinu Park), Oruhamo Creek, Greenhithe.”, he gave the Maori history of the fortified pa situated there and he wrote of Tauhinu Park: “Nature commenced the work, but left the hands of man to finish and beautify. There are hills to climb, glens to stroll through, banks or braes to rest or lounge on, streams and swamps (the home of the raupo), bush and forest to wander amongst, with shrubs, and ferns in endless variety”.

The property was named Tauhinu Park after the old fortified pa on the highest ground — the name tauhinu coming from the native shrub, *Pomaderris phyllicifolia* var. *ericifolia* which Craig said was “common among the scrub in the district”. It may still be found there. When he left Princes Street, Craig built a house on the Greenhithe property which he called “The Manor House” and while



Fig. 16. Eric Craig aged 81 years.

this was being built he stayed with a daughter and her family on their fruit farm near Greenhithe. It is said that he walked $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles (2.41 km) from the farm to Tauhinu Park every day to supervise the building of his Manor House (Mrs Dennis pers. comm.). This was at the age of 83 or 84! When he went to live in the Manor House he kept his personal collection of curios and ferns there. During the first world war Craig opened a "Patriotic Shop" in Eden Terrace, Auckland, where he sold surplus items from his collections in aid of the national patriotic funds (Dr A. W. B. Powell pers. comm.).

Eric Craig liked to visit England every ten years or so (Mrs Dennis pers. comm.) and on his 81st birthday, in 1910, had his photograph taken in London (Fig. 16). Towards the end of his long life, though inactive and nearly blind, Craig continued to write coherent letters — several to Cheeseman, before consigning his remaining fern collections to the Museum.

From the Manor House, Tauhinu Park, Greenhithe, 16 December, 1922, Craig wrote:

"I have a very large collection of Fern Fronds from all parts of the World, well preserved and in excellent condition — fixed each on to cardboard sheets 17 inches in length and 10 inches wide — made into folding Books — containing each a different number of leaves — so that you can examine each fern separately and open out as far as the number of sheets will allow — I have of Ferns mounted in that way 1150 specimens or you may almost say Varieties . . . They are all in the cardboard Books and the Books are kept in Drawer Boxes of which there [are] 24 in two rows of 12 drawers high. The size of case in which the Drawers are pushed or pulled in or out is each one four feet two inches high and 21 inches wide. If you will oblige by letting me know if they will be of any use to you, at your earliest convenience I will then at once act according to your answer . . ."

Lastly he wrote to Cheeseman in January 1923 (the year in which Craig died, aged 94), "I am glad you have accepted my collection of mounted Ferns from all parts of the World and I will forward them to you with some old Maori Carvings in Wood that I have in my private Museum for many years . . ." These mounted ferns still form a major part of the overseas reference collection in the Auckland Institute and Museum Herbarium.

Acknowledgements. I am most grateful to Mrs Pat Dennis for providing information about her grandfather, Eric Craig, and for the loan of photographs. Thanks are also due to the Botany Departments of University of Auckland and Victoria University of Wellington for donating fern albums and a wooden box of mounted ferns to the Auckland Institute and Museum Herbarium; also to Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch, for checking their collections for Craig material.

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